

# MAY WEEK 1

**Today's Bible Story:** Over and Over (Training to Win the Prize) • 1 Corinthians 9:24-25  
(supporting: Matthew 22:36-40)

**Today's Bottom Line:** Keep practicing what matters most.

**Monthly Memory Verse:** Training the body has some value. But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and the life to come. 1 Timothy 4:8, NIRV

**Monthly Life App:** Commitment—Making a plan and putting it into practice

**Basic Truth:** I can trust God no matter what.

## ACTIVITY 1

**What You Need:** Floor tape and Bible

**What You Do:**

- Tape a start line and a finish line on the floor. Place the lines as far apart as possible.
- Instruct kids to line up on the start line.
- Tell the kids you'll read the verses from Large Group today and when they hear the key words, they can take a hop forward.
- When you read 1 Corinthians 9:24-25, kids can take ONE jump forward when they hear the key words "race, run, runner, or prize."
- When you read Matthew 22:36-40, they take TWO jumps forward when they hear the key word "love."
- Repeat at least three times.
- During the first round, shout the key words to help them remember what they are.
- During the second and third round, read the verses like normal and see who remembers the key words.
- If a kid jumps on a word that isn't a key word, they go back to the start line.

**What You Say:**

"Sometimes it was really hard to remember our key words to jump on. You really had to LISTEN and HEAR what I said. I also had to TALK in order for you to move. That reminds me of what we will learn about and practice all month long: Hear, Pray, Talk, and Live. That's our plan to help us practice our faith in Jesus. I can't wait to continue to learn alongside each of you as we

**[Bottom Line] keep practicing what matters most."**

## ACTIVITY 2

**What You Need:** Bibles, construction paper, stapler, scissors, and markers

**What You Do:**

- Have the kids look up 1 Corinthians 9:24-25.
- Remind them that 1 Corinthians is in the New Testament, the second part of the Bible.
  - Invite one kid to read 1 Corinthians 9:24-25 out loud
  - Pass out a piece of construction paper to each kid.
  - Instruct the kids to fold the paper in half, lengthwise (a hotdog fold), and cut or tear along the fold to make two strips.
  - Encourage the kids to staple the two strips together to make it long enough to fit around their heads as a paper crown.
  - Direct the kids to lay the paper out flat and decorate their crowns with markers however they want.
  - As they work, lead the following discussion:

- What does a gold medal runner have to do to prepare for a big race?
- Have you ever trained for a sport or prepared for a recital? What did you do to prepare?
- When we see someone receive a prize in a big race or competition, it can be easy to forget that they trained REALLY hard to win! What are some ways we train or practice our faith? (love God, love others; hear from God; pray to God; talk about God; live for God)
- Practicing these four things—Hear, Pray, Talk, Live—will help us love God and love others. That’s running in a way that will earn a prize. What kind of prize do we earn according to 1 Corinthians 9:25? Is it a crown like the one you made? (No, the prize lasts forever. When we put our faith in Jesus and practice loving God and others, we will win the prize of life forever with Jesus!)
  - Lay the crowns out flat in a stack.
  - Set them aside for prayer at the end of your small group time.

**What You Say:**

“Today, we talked about four ways we can grow or practice our faith. We’ll talk about these things all month long! Commitment is about making a plan and putting it into practice. Even though the word ‘faith’ can seem like a big church word that’s not-so-easy to understand, there are some simple ways we can follow Jesus each day! Paul reminded us in his letter to the Corinthians to ‘run in a way that will get you the prize.’ And the prize can’t be taken away or lost like a trophy, medal, or crown! The prize is life forever with Jesus in a perfect place! That’s why it’s so important to **[Bottom Line] keep practicing what matters most.**”

# ACTIVITY 3

**What You Need:** “Swat These” Activity Page, paper plates, glue, craft sticks

**What You Do:**

- Guide kids to spread out around your small group space.
- Give each kid a “Swat These” page, paper plate, craft stick and glue.
- Assemble paper plate, and craft stick with glue to create a flyswatter.
- Explain that you will read a sentence, and they will use their flyswatter to hit the word or image that correctly fills in the blank of the sentence.
- Before reading the sentences below, do a fun round of calling out the words “Hear, Pray, Talk, and Live” in a quick and random order.
- Let kids swat their page as fast as they can, trying to keep up with you.
- Sentences:
  - “When my Small Group Leader reads the Bible out loud, I am practicing \_\_\_\_ing from God.” (Hear)
  - “When I am scared at night in my bedroom, I \_\_\_\_ to God to protect me and help me be brave.” (Pray)
  - “When I have a question about God, I can \_\_\_\_ to my Small Group leader about it.” (Talk)
  - “When I practice Hearing from God, Praying to God, and Talking about God, it helps me \_\_\_\_ for God.” (Live)
  - “Reading a devotional helps me \_\_\_\_ from God.” (Hear)
  - “I can \_\_\_\_ to God anytime, anywhere, and about anything.” (Pray)
  - “I can \_\_\_\_ to my friends and family about God.” (Talk)
  - “The way we \_\_\_\_ our lives can point others to Jesus.” (Live)
- After giving kids a chance to swat the word or image on their page, announce the correct answer.
- If a kid swats the wrong word, only they will know, but if they get upset about being wrong, encourage them to try again and do their best on the next one.

**What You Say:**

“Swatting our answers sure was fun. To Hear from God, Pray to God, Talk about God, and Live for God are all ways we can grow our faith. Just like a runner has a plan and train to get better at running, we have this plan to train and grow in our faith. The cool thing is that you’ll ALWAYS be practicing your faith! I’m still practicing my faith right now!

[Make it Personal] (Share a story about when you lived out part of this plan., i.e. you kept a prayer journal, someone ahead of you in faith talked to you about God, someone showed you what it means to hear from God, or you lived out your faith and showed someone else who God is. Let this be a moment for you to show kids that you’re still growing in your faith, too!)

**[Bottom Line] “Keep practicing what matters most.”**

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**What You Need:** No supplies needed

**What You Do:**

**Ask:**

- What makes us feel like quitting something even though we know it's important to keep practicing and get better at it?
- What can you do or remember when you want to quit practicing something important?
- How does practice help you?
- What are the benefits of staying committed to the things that are important and matter most? What are some consequences of not sticking with something important?
- How would you define COMMITMENT?

Modify questions for younger children.

# PRAYER

**What You Need:** Crowns from activity 2 and stapler

**What You Do:**

- Help the kids place the crown around their heads for sizing, bringing the ends together.
- Let the kids hand you their crowns to staple.
- Encourage kids to wear their crowns as you lead the group in prayer

**What You Say:**

“Heavenly Father, You are awesome! Thanks for reminding us how important it is to [Bottom Line] keep practicing what matters most. Help us make a commitment to follow You so we can love You and love others. Thank You for Jesus. In His name we pray, amen.”